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To be Continued.)

We could not answer. Darzac told us that the event which had changed the face of his existence had taken place at Bourg. Two compartments of the sleeping car had been reserved by Darzac, and these compartments were joined by a little dressing room. In one had been placed the traveling bag with the toilet articles of Mme. Darzac and in the other the smaller packages. It was to the latter compartment that the Darzacs and Professor Stangerson had traveled from Paris to Dijon, where the three had left the train and had dined at the buffet. They had arrived at 6:27 o'clock, exactly on time, and M. Stangerson had left Dijon at eight minutes after 7 and the Darzacs at just 7 o'clock.

The professor had hidden adieu to his daughter and his son-in-law upon the platform of the station. The Darzacs had returned to one of their compartments and remained at the window, chatting with the professor until the train started. As it steamed out the pair waved their hands to Stangerson, who was standing on the platform throwing kisses.

From Dijon to Bourg neither M. nor Mme. Darzac had occasion to enter the adjacent compartment where Mme. Darzac's night bag had been placed. The door had not been locked either upon the outside with a key by the porter nor on the inside with the bolt by the Darzacs. The curtain of the glass door had been drawn over the pane from the inside by M. Darzac in such a way that no one could look into the compartment from the corridor. But the curtain between the two compartments had not been drawn.

All of these circumstances were brought out by the questions asked by Roulettable of M. Darzac.

When they reached Bourg our travelers learned that on account of an accident on the line at Culoz the train would be delayed for an hour and a half. M. and Mme. Darzac alighted and took a stroll on the platform.

Darzac while talking with his wife mentioned the fact that he had forgotten to write important letters before leaving Paris. Both entered the buffet, and Darzac asked for writing materials. Mathilde sat beside him for a few moments and then remarked that she would take a little walk through the station while he finished his letters.

"Very well," replied Darzac. "As soon as I have finished I will join you."

From that point I will quote Darzac's own words.

"I had finished writing," he said, "and I arose to go and look for Mathilde when I saw her approaching the buffet pallid and trembling. As soon as she perceived me she uttered a shriek and threw herself into my arms. 'Oh, my God,' she cried, 'oh, my God!' It seemed impossible for her to utter any other words. She was shaking from head to foot. I tried to calm her, and I begged her to take some restorative. Her teeth chattered as though she had an ague. At length she told me that she had started to walk about the station, but that she had not dared to go far lest I should finish my writing and look for her. Then she went upon the platform, when she noticed the sleeping car porters making up the bed in a berth near by that was left empty by her. In little of what we had said, and he appeared very mournful. Her father saw that something had happened since we had left him, which we were concealing from him. Mathilde began to talk of the ceremony of the morning, and in that way the conversation came around to you, my young friend"—and again Darzac addressed himself to Roulettable—"and I took the occasion to say to M. Stangerson that since your vacation was just beginning at the time that we were all going to Mentone you might be pleased with an invitation that would give you the chance of spending your holiday in our society. There was, I said, plenty of room at Rochers Rouges, and I was certain that M. Arthur Rance and his bride would extend to you a cordial welcome. While I was speaking Mathilde looked gratefully at me and pressed my hand tenderly. Thus it happened that when we reached Valenciennes I had M. Stangerson write the dispatch which you must have received. While her father rested in his compartments next to ours Mathilde opened my traveling bag and took out my revolver, saying: 'If he should attack us you must defend yourself.' Ah, what a night we passed! I longed to console her, to comfort her, but I found no words. And when once I attempted to speak she made a gesture so full of misery and desolation that I realized that I would be far kinder if I kept silence."

This was Darzac's story. We felt, Roulettable and myself, that the narrative was so important that we both resolved on arriving at Mentone that we would write it down from memory. At the station of Mentone (Darzac found Arthur Rance, who was astonished at beholding the bride and bridegroom. But when he was told that they intended to spend a few days with him he was delighted. Arthur Rance did not, even after his marriage to Miss Edith Prescott, been able to overcome the extreme reserve with which Darzac had always treated him.

So far as Darzac was concerned, the terror which he felt was increased by news brought to us by Arthur Rance when he met us at Nice. But before this there had occurred a little incident which I cannot pass by in silence. As soon as we reached the Nice station I had jumped from the train and hurried into the telegraph office to ask whether there was any message for

me. A messenger was added to me, and without opening it I went back to Darzac and Roulettable.

"Read this," I said to the young reporter.

Roulettable opened the envelope and read. "Brignolles has not been away from Paris since April 6. This is an absolute certainty."

Roulettable then said:

"Well, what does this amount to now that you have it?"

"It was at Dijon," I rejoined, vexed at the attitude of the lad, "that the door came to me. The Brignolles might be concerned in the misfortune which was given by the telegram you received. I wired a friend to make inquiries in regard to the movements of the fellow."

"Well," said Roulettable, "you have your inquiries answered. Are you willing to admit now that Brignolles is not and has never been Darzac in disguise?"

"I never thought of any such thing as that," I exclaimed. I suspected that Roulettable was laughing at me. The truth was that the idea had actually entered my mind.

And this time both Darzac and Roulettable begged my pardon and paid their respects to my despised intrusions. I mention this incident here to show to how great an extent I was haunted by the image of Larsan hiding under some new form and lurking unknown among us. Dear heaven! Larsan had so often proved his genius in this respect that I felt him quite capable of defying us now and of mingling with us perhaps even as a friend."

To be Continued.)

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